

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 057425

O 072127Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9199

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 11680

EXDIS

NESCO

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PORG, UNESCO, XF

SUBJECT: UNESCO 97TH EXBD: CONVERSATION WITH NAJMAN.

REF: STATE 104317

1. SUMMARY. US EXBD MEMBER SCHERER, PERMREP JONES, STULL AND BAKER HAD LENGTHY CONVERSATION MAY 7 WITH UNESCO DIRECTOR OF HIGHER EDUCATION DRAGOLJUB NAJMAN COVERING BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES DISCUSSED IN REFTTEL. NAJMAN DESCRIBED FORCEFULLY AND IN SOME DETAIL EFFORTS OF DG TO MAKE CONTACT WITH ISRAEL, TO DEFLECT PRESSURES FROM PLO TO ENHANCE THEIR STATUS AT UNESCO, TO REMOVE ISSUE OF EDUCATION IN ISRAELI OCCUPIED TERRITORIES FROM AGENDA OF EXBD MEETING, AND TO ACHIEVE BUSINESSLIKE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN WHICH DIVISIVE ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE WOULD NOT BE RE-OPENED. NAJMAN STRESSED THAT IN ABSENCE OF CAREFUL PRIOR PREPARATION POSSIBILITY OF ANY POSITIVE SIGNAL OUT OF EXBD MEETING THAT IT WAS MOVING TOWARDS REVIEW OF GENERAL CONFERENCE DECISIONS ON REGIONAL GROUP MEMBERSHIP WAS VERY SMALL AND ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN ONE COULD BE DAMAGING. WITH RESPECT TO ISSUE OF INVITATIONS TO CONFERENCE ON RECOGNITION OF HIGHER STUDIES OF EUROPEAN AND ARAB STATE BORDERING ON MEDITERRANEAN SCHEDULED TO BE DISCUSSED IN PROGRAMME

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COMMISSION ON MAY 9 AT 12:00, HE STRONGLY CAUTIONED

AGAINST A US POSTURE WHICH COULD OPEN UP REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP ISSUE AND BREAK PRESENT TRUCE ON POLITICAL ISSUES WHICH HE FELT DIRECTOR GENERAL HAD NOW SUCCESSFULLY OBTAINED AT GREAT COST OF PERSONAL EFFORT. CONCERNING JERUSALEM ISSUE, NAJMAN ESTIMATED THAT NOTHING COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT MINIMUM SIGN OF GOOD WILL FROM ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER PERMREP JONES HAD INTRODUCED BASIC PROBLEM BEFORE US IN OBTAINING POSITIVE SIGNAL FROM EXBD MEETING IN LIGHT OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY CONGRESS, US EXBD MEMBER SCHERER DESCRIBED CURRENT SERIOUS CONCERNS OF UNESCO SUPPORTERS IN THE UNITED STATES STEMMING FROM THE FACT THAT THE LONG STANDING OPPOSITION TO UNESCO IN THE US HAD NOW BEEN STRENGTHENED BY A SUBSTANTIAL CURRENT OF LIBERAL CRITICISM. NAJMAN RESPONDED THAT WHILE CRITICISM IN INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES OF OTHER COUNTRIES APPEARED TO BE ON THE DECLINE, HE WAS AWARE OF A RECENT UPSURGE IN CRITICISM OF UNESCO FROM SUCH CIRCLES IN THE US CITING THE RECENT FULL-PAGE ADVERTISEMENT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AS WELL AS OTHER COMMUNICATIONS AND PRESS ARTICLES WHICH HAD REACHED HIS DESK.

3. NAJMAN DETAILED THE EFFORTS WHICH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL HAD MADE TO DEPOLITICIZE THE PRESENT EXBD SESSION, RECALLING THAT HIS OWN VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN JANUARY AND HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH DEPUTY ASST. SECRETARY BLAKE BY PHONE FROM NEW YORK HAD CONFIRMED HIS VIEW THAT THIS WAS BEST POSSIBLE COURSE TO FOLLOW AT THE PRESENT TIME. HE NOTED THAT DIRECTOR GENERAL HAD DEFLECTED THREE SUCCESSIVE EFFORTS BY PLO TO ENHANCE ITS STATUS AT UNESCO: (1) AN EFFORT TO GET THE EXBD TO APPROVE PERMREP STATUS FOR THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE TO UNESCO; (2) AN EFFORT TO HAVE THE EXBD APPROVE PLO OBSERVER STATUS AT THE PRESENT EXBD SESSION; (3) AN EFFORT TO SEND A SPECIAL PLO DELEGATION TO OBSERVE THE EXBD SESSION. HE STRESSED THAT IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT FOR THE DG TO ACHIEVE THIS AND THAT THERE WAS NO CERTAINTY THAT ONE OR MORE OF THESE PLO INITIATIVES WOULD NOT BE CONFIDENTIAL

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REVIVED IF THE ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE WERE TO BE REOPENED AT ANY STAGE OF THIS EXBD SESSION.

4. NAJMAN ALSO NOTED THAT THE DG HAD SUCCEEDED IN REMOVING ITEM 9.5 ON EDUCATION IN THE ISRAELI OCCUPIED TERRITORIES FROM THE AGENDA, WHERE AS THERE WAS STILL SUCH AN ITEM ON THE WHO AGENDA. HE ADDED THAT HOLDING OFF THE PLO HAD BEEN ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT IN LIGHT OF

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PLO ASPIRATIONS TO ENHANCE ITS VISABILITY AND STATUS IN UN SYSTEM PARTICULARLY WITH VIEW TO ENHANCING CLAIMS FOR REPRESENTATION AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

5. QUERIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A NON-CONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION RECALLING BASIC UNESCO PRINCIPLES AND THE RIGHT OF ALL UNESCO MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE APPROPRIATELY IN RELEVANT UNESCO ACTIVITIES, NAJMAN STATED THAT SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD MOST APPROPRIATELY BE LINKED TO THE PRESENTATION OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT (ON MAY 13). HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT WERE SUCH A DRAFT TO EMERGE AND BE CIRCULATED AT THIS POINT, IT WOULD RAISE SUSPICIONS AND POSSIBLE CONTROVERSY, PARTICULARLY IF IT ALLUDED EVEN INDIRECTLY TO THE PROBLEM OF MEMBERSHIP IN REGIONAL GROUPS. NAJMAN RECALLED THAT HE HAD RAISED THIS POSSIBILITY IN A GENERAL WAY EARLIER THIS YEAR OBSERVING THAT IT WOULD TAKE SOME CAREFUL ADVANCED PREPARATION AMONG MEMBERS OF THE EXBD. HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH PREPARATION FOR CURRENT EXBD, HE DID NOT THINK ANYTHING BUT VERY INNOCUOUS TYPE OF RESOLUTION BASED ON UNESCO PRINCIPLES COULD BE ADOPTED, IF THAT. SPECIFICALLY, HE EXCLUDED PROSPECT OF OBTAINING LANGUAGE SUCH AS IS FOUND IN THIRD PREAMBULA OF GENERAL CONFERENCE RES. 46.1 AT THIS TIME. IN THIS REGARD HE SPECULATED

POSITIVELY ON PROSPECT FOR OBTAINING SOMETHING AT NEXT
EXBD ALONG LINE OF RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THAT NEXT
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GENERAL CONFERENCE EXAMINE THE QUESTION OF REGIONAL
REPRESENTATION AND THE ASSIGNMENT OF MEMBERS TO
APPROPRIATE REGIONAL GROUPS

6. SCHERER DETAILED HIS MEETING WITH THE UNESCO NATIONAL COMMISSION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON MAY 2 DESCRIBING THE THREE ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STRONGLY FELT WOULD BE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO POINT THE WAY TOWARDS REGULARIZATION OF US-UNESCO RELATIONS, AND TO DEFLECT THE STRONG PRESSURES FROM IMPORTANT SEGMENTS OF THE US INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY FOR BOYCOTT OF UNESCO ACTIVITIES. HE ADDED THAT, IN LIGHT OF NAJMAN'S REMARKS, NONE OF THESE ALTERNATIVES STOOD A CHANCE OF ADOPTION AT THIS EXBD SESSION AND EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN LEST IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH SIGNS OF MOVEMENT MOMENTUM BUILD IN THE US FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM UNESCO. HE OBSERVED THAT THERE WAS AWARENESS IN THE US NATIONAL COMMISSION OF THE SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ITEM ON INVITATIONS TO THE CONFERENCE OF MEDITERRANEAN STATES ON RECOGNITION OF STUDIES. SCHERER ADDED THAT THE FACT THAT PREPARATIONS FOR THIS CONFERENCE HAD STARTED YEARS BEFORE THE GENERAL CONFERENCE'S REJECTION OF ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP WOULD BE IGNORED IN PRESS TREATMENT OF THIS ISSUE, ADDING THAT THE ABSENCE OF AN INVITATION TO ISRAEL WOULD BE SEEN AS A FURTHER HARDENING OF UNESCO'S DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ISRAEL. (ED. WE ARE INFORMED THAT TWO ISRAELI JOURNALISTS HAVE ASKED FOR FULL UNESCO DOCUMENTATION ON THIS ITEM.) SCHERER STATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE HE COULD AVOID A CLEAR STATEMENT OF HIS VIEWS ON THIS ITEM. NAJMAN EXPRESSED IMMEDIATE CONCERN THAT A FORCEFUL US STATEMENT COULD BREAK THE CURRENT DELICATE TRUCE AND LEAD TO REOPENING THE PLO STATUS ISSUE. IN THIS EVENT, THE ISSUE WOULD COME BEFORE THE BOARD WITH MORE THAN ADEQUATE ARAB, SOCIALIST AND RELUCTANT OR OTHERWISE AFRICAN VOTES TO SUPPORT THE PLO AGAINST THE FEW LIKELY NEGATIVE VOTES.

7. WHEN NAJMAN OBSERVED THAT HE HAD NO INDICATIONS THAT ISRAELIS WERE PRESSING FOR INVITATION TO ABOVE DESCRIBED CONFERENCE, IT WAS STRESSED TO HIM THAT WE
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NOT ACTING IN THIS MATTER ON ISRAELI BEHALF BUT OUT OF
CONCERN FOR PRESENT SITUATION IN US-UNESCO RELATIONS.

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THIS HAD EVOLVED FROM TWO DECISIONS OF 18TH GENERAL
CONFERENCE, ONE OF WHICH WAS NOW CITED IN CONNECTION
WITH INVITATION LIST. NAJMAN INTERJECTED THAT M'BOW
HAD MADE A NUMBER OF EFFORTS TOWARDS THE ISRAELIS,
CITING THE OFFER OF FUNDS FOR A P.E.N. CLUB MEETING,
FOR AN EDUCATION PROJECT, FOR VISITS BY A REPRESENTATIVE
OF HIS OFFICE, BY LEMAIRE, OR EVEN (VIA MAARIV) OF HIMSELF.
ISRAELIS HAD REJECTED ALL OF THEM. SCHERER ACKNOWLEDGED
THIS, RECOGNIZING THAT ISRAELI POSITION PRECLUDED ACTION
AT THIS TIME ON JERUSALEM EXCAVATIONS ISSUE. HE RETURNED
TO ISSUE OF US-UNESCO RELATIONS AND EMPHASIZED NEED TO
SHOW SOME MOVEMENT IF POSSIBLE AT LEAST ON REGIONAL GROUP
ISSUE.

8. NAJMAN THEN REFERRED TO HIS PLAN TO BE IN US DURING
PART OF JUNEPREPCOM FOR 7TH UNGASS AND M'BOW INTENTION
TO BE IN NEW YORK IN EARLY SEPTEMBER AT UNGASS. HE OFFERED
TO MEET WITH DEPT. AND UNESCO COMMISSION OFFICIALS AT THAT
TIME TO CONSIDER STEPS LOOKING TOWARD SEPTEMBER EXBD
MEETING IN TIME FRAME WHICH WILL PERMIT BETTER CHANCE OF
SUCCESS, PARTICULARLY AGAINST BACKGROUND OF WHAT HE HOPED
WOULD BE PROGRESS IN MIDDLE EAST AND BE SCHERER US STAND
TOWARD PLO. HE ALSO SUGGESTED WE CON-

SIDER WHETHER M'BOW MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE IN DIRECT INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH SELECTED US INTELLECTUALS, DESCRIBING HIS RECENT SUCCESS WITH GERMAN INTELLECTUAL CRITICS IN BONN. STULL AND BAKER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR NAJMAN'S OFFER AND ASSURED HIM OF DEPT'S CONFIDENTIAL

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INTEREST IN FOLLOWING IT UP DURING HIS VISIT. AFTER ADDITIONAL EXCHANGES IN WHICH NAJMAN UNDERLINED COMMITMENT OF M'BOW TO SAME OBJECTIVES AS US IN REMOVING ANY POLITICALLY DISCRIMINATORY RESTRICTIONS ON PARTICIPATION IN UNESCO ACTIVITIES, MEETING CONCLUDED ON NOTE OF AGREEMENT TO FUTURE COOPERATION TO THIS END.
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